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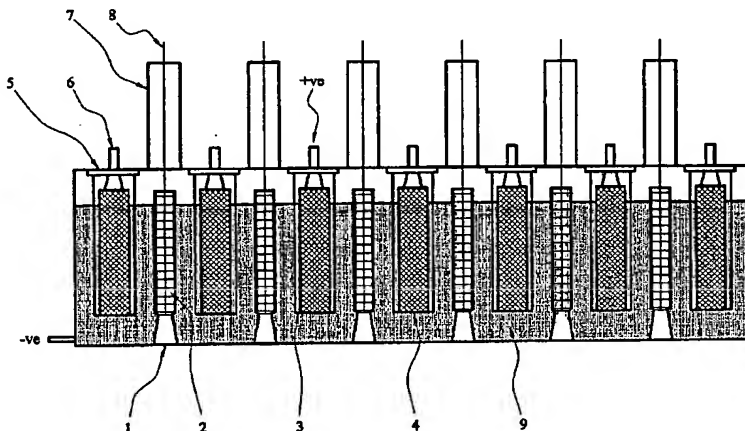
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(54) Title: ELECTROCHEMICAL CELL FOR METAL PRODUCTION



(57) **Abstract:** The invention provides a process for reducing to metallic form metal oxides, the process comprising cathodically electrolyzing the oxide in the presence of a molten salt electrolyte whilst controlling the potential of the cathode so as to favour oxygen ionisation over deposition of metal from the cations present in the molten salt, and an apparatus for performing the said process, the said apparatus being free from bolted or screwed fittings and comprising an electrochemical cell which comprises a body or housing, a cathode container, and a cathode connector, wherein said body or housing is maintained as the cathode. The process provides a single electrochemical process to reduce the metal oxide fuel to a metallic form, with oxygen produced as the only by-product, and offers a more practical, efficient and financially viable means for the production of metal from oxides than is available from the prior art. The metallic solid which is produced can be removed or used directly as the feed for an electrorefining process. In an alternative embodiment, the electrolytic ionisation of oxygen and the electrorefining processes are carried out in the same cell and the same salt system.

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